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ABSTRACT

This guide to various types of church-operated preschool programs discusses needs and purposes of congregation, child and community, describes different types of programs, and provides lists of printed resources and organizations which can help congregations establish or improve their early childhood education efforts. Resource suggestions and lists of materials are presented for each type of program described (Sunday programs, weekday programs, and other services). Sunday programs include Sunday school classes (from age 3) and the church nursery. Weekday programs include the nursery school (daily or less often), parent cooperative, kindergarten, weekday school (a short, weekly session), and day care center. Other types of services, described briefly, are: the drop-in early childhood center, the playgroup, the materials center, and types of federal and state programs available for church sponsorship. The role of religion in the early childhood education program is discussed, and parent education and participation are emphasized. Guidelines are given for: program organization, administration and staffing, physical setup and supplies, transportation, and financing and budgeting. A list of general references on early childhood education and lists of professional journals, organizations and publishers are included at the end of the volume. (BF)

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Information Bulletin on Christian Education
NO. 201-2

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Special acknowledgments are due Dr. William A. Kramer, retired Secretary of Elementary and Secondary Schools, Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod; Dr. Velma E. Schmidt, Director of Early Childhood Education, School of Education, North Texas State University; Mr. Kenneth E. Markworth, Executive Secretary, Central Illinois District, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod; Mrs. Lois Vogel, Preschool and Kindergarten Teacher, Our Saviour Lutheran School, Kansas City, Kans.; and Rev. Daniel R. Burow, Editor of Preprimary Materials, Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. The compiler of this bulletin, Dr. William Kramer, has drawn heavily on written statements by Dr. Schmidt, Mr. Markworth, and Mrs. Vogel, and on a printed statement in *Patterns of Performance*, 1972 – 73, by Rev. Burow. Final editing and layout were done by David Rohde. Their contributions are gratefully appreciated.

Most of the "Selected References" appearing in the body of this bulletin and most of the "Aids for Planners and Teachers" were supplied by Dr. Velma E. Schmidt, a specialist in early childhood education. Special thanks are due Dr. Schmidt for her substantial contributions.

We appreciate the opportunity to produce this bulletin in coordination with the Department of Early Childhood Education of The Lutheran Education Association. It is our hope and prayer that this bulletin may prove to be helpful to the church as Lutheran congregations seek ways to minister to the young child and his parents.

Al H. Senske

Secretary of Elementary and
Secondary Schools

Board of Parish Education

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

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Introduction

Definition of Early Childhood Education

The term "early childhood education" generally covers the years from infancy through the primary grades. However, this bulletin will emphasize chiefly ages 3 to 5, though it will give some attention also to the earlier years, especially in the sections on the Nursery Roll and the Day Care Center.

The Importance of Early Childhood Education

> "As the twig is bent so the tree" has long been axiomatic, but until recently general educational practices indicated a belief that the primary grades were early enough to begin to do the "bending." That this was already too late a period to start came as somewhat of a shock.
>
> The most malleable period in any area of a person's development seems to be that in which the most rapid growth takes place. Since a person undergoes half of his growth in height, intelligence, and general learning ability prior to age 6, the preprimary years are probably the ones most susceptible to educational influence. Educational intervention either takes place at this time or misses one of its greatest opportunities. . . .
>
> Not all intervention is good—certainly not for all children in all situations. The preschooler is highly susceptible to various influences—not only to good but to bad as well—and we cannot automatically assume that the effect of all adult or even church intervention in his life will be good.[1]

Therefore the church should be deeply concerned that its efforts in early childhood education meet rather than impair the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of the preschool child.

Current Emphasis on Early Childhood Education

During the past decade early childhood education has received increasing emphasis on the part of parents, educators, legislators, educational publishers, and churches. The church has included the preprimary years in its educational planning and materials. A number of Districts in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod have urged congregations to start nursery schools and otherwise to aid parents of young children. The Lutheran Education Association Yearbook for 1970 was titled *Early Childhood Education and the Church*. That same year the Lutheran Education Association initiated a Department of Early Childhood Education.

Yet we have only begun to understand the importance of the child's early years. Lip service has far exceeded our efforts to meet the needs of the preschool child. This applies to children in our own congregations and to those in the community, including children from economically disadvantaged families, whose need is often the greatest.

Down through the years The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has sought to provide quality education in a Christian setting through its elementary and secondary schools. Now it is endeavoring to do this also on the early childhood level.

Purpose of This Bulletin

The purpose of this bulletin is threefold:

1. To emphasize that any congregation-operated early childhood education program must grow out of the needs and purposes of the congregation
   a. to equip the saints whatever their age
   b. to reach out beyond the congregation with the message of grace and forgiveness
   c. to serve the community in whatever ways the resources of the congregation permit.
2. To enumerate and briefly explain programs of early childhood education which congregations may find feasible (either individually or in cooperation with other congregations or community organizations).
3. To provide a list of printed resources and of professional organizations which can help congregations establish or improve their early childhood education efforts.

[1] "Preschool Mission," *Standards and Requirements, Patterns of Performance*, 1972–73, p. 10. Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Needs and Nature of the Young Child

The needs and nature of the young child, plus the congregation's human and material resources, should determine what early childhood education programs a congregation will sponsor.

The Needs of the Young Child

The preschool child needs a sense of security and safety. He needs a sense of his own worth; unconditional love; mothering; physical activity; opportunities for socializing, sense exploration and play; interaction with adults by which to develop vocabulary and test ideas; opportunities to exercise choices; relationships that foster love and trust; an adult model for the formation of Christian attitudes and values; discipline dominated by love and forgiveness; motivation for learning; and experiences that teach him how to learn.

Most of all, the young child needs to experience God's love for him. Without this he will be spiritually handicapped and will suffer in other areas of his development. This does not mean that he won't rise above this handicap. Many have. Nor does this mean that if he is developed spiritually in his preschool years he will always remain so. Many have not. The most we can say is that proper spiritual development in these tender years is as important as, if not more important than, the spiritual training he receives in any other comparable period of his life. This in itself is enough to rate the church's preschool mission TOP PRIORITY.[2]

Therefore a congregation should strive to bring God's love into the hearts and lives of young children and in cooperation with the parents to do this as early, as effectively, and as continuously as possible. The church's primary concern is with the spiritual development of the child. However, his spiritual development inter-relates with his physical, mental, social, and emotional development. This is the reason for early childhood education programs that go beyond a purely religious education.

Even the most favorably situated congregation cannot meet all the needs of a young child. At best it can only assist the home in the task which God gave to both home and church. The home has the greatest influence on a young child for the simple reason that there he is fed when hungry, nursed when sick, comforted when troubled, cuddled when he needs loving, and in general watched over and cared for. Thus, in its early childhood education activities a congregation should ask itself: How can we best assist parents? What can our congregation do for young children that many parents cannot or in some cases will not do? How can we supplement, undergird, and strengthen present efforts to make the work of home and church more effective and more lasting?

[2] Ibid., pp. 11, 12.

The Nature of the Young Child [3]

Child development cannot be charted because each child is unique. Each grows at his own rate. While each goes through the same stages of development, one child may be developing fine muscle coordination while another of the same age is still struggling to coordinate his large muscles. So in learning: Each child has his own timetable. Girls are often ahead of boys of the same age. But young children have representative characteristics and their development between ages three to five follows this approximate pattern.

About 3 Years of Age	*About 5 Years of Age*	*Parent and Teacher Responsibility*
From	***To***	
1. Developing the large muscles	Developing the smaller muscles	Provide equipment and activities that require use of large muscles, and later finer, smaller muscles.
2. Depending on adults for help	Showing greater independence in learning and solving problems	Help the child learn how to do things by himself.
3. Solving problems and communicating through physical actions	Using words more than actions	Suggest language substitutes for physical force.
4. Using simple words and sentences	Using more complex and abstract sentences and stories	Serve as a model of language, which increases a child's use of language.
5. Requiring regular daytime naps	Needing periodic rest and activities that encourage relaxation	Provide opportunities for rest when needed.
6. Confusing fantasy with what is real	Understanding the difference between reality and fantasy	Help clarify the difference between reality and fantasy as situations arise.
7. Erratic activity level with need to be active	Beginning to sit still for short periods	Provide chance to be active with proper equipment.
8. Being egocentric or self-centered	Thinking of children and adults and his relation to them	Provide opportunities for playing and working individually and gradually in small groups.
9. Being interested in the here and now	Being interested in yesterday and tomorrow, and in a wider environment	Introduce new experiences and help the child understand the world around him.
10. Needing much help in controlling his behavior	Beginning to develop self-control, accepting suggestions, and initiating an action	Serve as a model of self-control and give specific suggestions on how the child can control himself.

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Schmidt, Velma E. *Early Childhood Education and the Church*. 1970 Yearbook, Lutheran Education Association. See Table of Contents for applicable chapters.

[3] Development pattern by Velma E. Schmidt.

Goals in Early Childhood Education [4]

Some goals of early childhood education are quite similar to goals at other ages. For example, the goal to foster Christian faith and life is a basic educational goal throughout life, also in early childhood education. However, different levels of maturity call for different approaches. Thus, early childhood education requires special emphasis on development of self-image, self-expression, self-direction, social and language skills, intellectual and emotional growth, and spiritual development.

The young child will, of course, have begun development in each of these areas long before he could benefit from any church-sponsored classroom programs. Therefore, the goal of early childhood education in the church is, first, to assist parents or other caring adults to help the child develop needed understandings, skills, and attitudes in keeping with his level of maturity and to give his life a Christian direction. Afterwards the church may continue this assistance through some type of classroom program.

Self-Image

What the child thinks of himself helps to determine what kind of person he will be, how he will meet challenges, and how he will respond to situations and people. When he thinks of himself as a person loved by God despite sins, mistakes, or inabilities to cope with difficult situations, he will be better able to sustain the hope and confidence necessary for happiness and success. He can respond in love to God and to Jesus, his Savior. He is better able to accept, love, and forgive other people. But the child must also see himself as a person loved and accepted by other people, particularly by the adults who mean most to him, or he will have difficulty believing that he is loved and accepted by God.

The church's efforts in early childhood education must therefore demonstrate the love that God has for people and that His people have for one another. This points to the importance of a program that nurtures and involves parents and teachers alike in demonstrating God's love to the child. Such a program also requires careful planning of activities that challenge the child's imagination and abilities, yet promote successes in tasks made gradually more difficult. Adults need not accept everything the child does; they will, of course, correct him when necessary. But when they continue to accept him, encourage him, and stand by him as God does—in sins, successes, and failures—then the child can develop a positive, Christian image of himself.

Self-Expression

Self-expression means the expression of personality—what a person is, knows, thinks, feels—in his own way. For the Christian self-expression is frequently an expression of what the Spirit is doing within the person. It is individual and creative. In young children self-expression takes many forms—art, body movement, dramatic play, construction, music, language.

A child thinks imaginatively about many things, often more than adults realize. The child's ideas may be incomplete, inaccurate, or incorrect. But he expresses himself, as adults do, in what he knows and in the challenges and situations he faces.

Self-expression ceases when a way of expression is imposed or when individuality and imagination are stifled. In Christian child development the adult leader, whether parent or teacher, should give ample range to the child's potential for understanding and imagining. He should provide guidance and suggestions which expand the child's horizons of understanding and thinking. He should permit the child to express himself at his own level of thinking and to progress as his horizons expand. Yet, he should also exercise loving discipline and teach the child God's standards for conduct.

Self-Direction

We cannot fashion a child today to meet the specific problems of tomorrow because we cannot foresee tomorrow's problems. But we can help fashion self-directed people who can confront a new problem, analyze it, and work toward a beneficial solution. One of our goals in early childhood education is to help develop such self-directed people rather than people who merely respond obediently to somebody else's goading.

The ability to direct one's self develops gradually, under guidance. For example: A child selects his task from available choices, learns to "attend to" the task, and to work at it for a period of time. Gradually his ability to stay with a task increases. Eventually, as he acquires necessary social skills, he carries on activities as one member of a small group, with language serving as the means of communication.

Under guidance the child learns to plan, to carry out plans, to seek help as needed, and to judge the results of his activity. As he learns to use his mind and the available resources, including the resources of the Spirit, he rises to higher levels of performance and decision-making. He grows in self-direction, which will stand him in good stead the rest of his life.

[4] Based on a section of a manuscript "Early Childhood Education Programs and the Church," by Velma E. Schmidt.

Interaction Skills

People are social beings. They need one another and will cluster together if for no other reason than self-interest and self-preservation. The Scriptural concept of the church as the body of Christ, of course, leads us far beyond such motivation for socialization. It calls upon the members in that body to interact with love and forgiveness.

Even the very young child can be engaged in learning the skills necessary for Christian interaction and for social competence. He learns first to react to the togetherness in his own family, but for his own happiness and usefulness, he must also learn to live and work with others in a Christ-like manner.

Expanded experiences in and outside the home, accompanied by appropriate opportunities, encouragement, and wise adult guidance, help the child develop and practice the skills needed for living with others.

As he develops his interaction skills, he gradually learns to deal with conflicts within himself and between himself and others. A common cause of internal conflict stems from the child's need and desire to become independent while still lacking the judgement to know when he is able to be independent and when he needs to depend on others. The role of the adult leader is to provide opportunities for the child to practice making such judgements and to test the results through success-failure experiences.

A variety of informal group situations provide the best environments for growth in interaction skills. Here perceptive adults will sense when a child needs guidance, and they can provide experiences which will help the child grow in the Christian graces and social competence. By word and example they can portray the love of God, which is the source and motivation for love and harmony among people, and can form with the children a community of God's people.

Language Skills

The school program for primary children (ages 6–8) assumes that the child understands the language he uses. Frequently, however, a child's language ability fails to meet the expectations of the primary school. Early childhood education is concerned, therefore, with laying a sound basis for language development.

The young child learns the basics of language in the home. However, not all homes provide equally good models for language development. Where this development is stunted, the group settings of early childhood programs must help the child enlarge his vocabulary and develop more complex sentence structures. Extension of the child's vocabulary occurs as he practices language with his peers, with older children, and with adults.

Only through hearing and practicing correct language will the child's language ability improve. The parent or teacher who understands this helps to extend the child's language ability through the language he uses (models), through religious or secular stories and poems, and through real life experiences—field trips, objects brought to the school, food, cooking, and other activities and experiences that build vocabulary and stimulate oral expression.

Intellectual Growth

Early childhood education efforts are not a part of formal academic education. Research indicates that pushing the young child into early reading does not necessarily produce a better reader in the long run. In fact, some research indicates that such pushing may permanently harm his ability to read. Children grow at their own rate. They will learn reading and other skills when they are ready if given the proper stimulation and opportunity. Early childhood education is concerned with providing experiences that stimulate curiosity and the desire to learn. It provides for learning experiences on the child's own level and increases his opportunities to learn, without introducing formal academic study prematurely.

The child's intellectual capacities are stimulated through equipment and materials; through new concepts gained from objects, books, experiences, and conversation about things that interest him; and through living, playing and working with others.

Spiritual Development

The church baptizes its young, but its concern for them does not end there. The spiritual life God begins in the child through baptism must be nourished and developed or it dies.

The only effective means the church has for nourishing spiritual life is the Word of God, especially the message of God's love in Christ. This message the church must proclaim through words and action. However, the younger the child is the less he understands words and the more he is dependent on learning about God's love through the actions of the people around him and through his experiences with them. Thus, the Word of God must take on flesh and blood, as it did in the person of Jesus who is God's Word incarnate.

An infant develops a kind of faith or confidence as he experiences the loving care of the people around him. At first this faith is very

generalized. The infant does not understand who he has confidence in, only that he is confident of receiving loving care. As the infant grows he begins to distinguish faces. His faith that someone loves and cares for him is increasingly directed toward specific faces. Later he even learns to identify these faces by name because he hears their names, such as "Mommy" and "Daddy," again and again. He may also hear words like "Mommy loves her Jimmy." When these words are accompanied by hugs and kisses, etc., the word "love" becomes more than a sound. It takes on a meaning that the child likes and enjoys.

In the same way other words, such as "God," "Jesus," "heavenly Father," take on meaning. If the child usually hears the word "God" followed by a few "damns" and a temper tantrum, that name will have a totally different meaning for him than if he hears loving parents say, "God, thank You for loving Jimmy." In the latter case the child's faith in his parents is directed also toward someone called "God" because this other Person also loves him.

The fact that the child cannot see who his parents are praying to helps him experience God as an unseen Presence. Does the child feel confident in God's presence? Yes, if the words he hears about God and the tones in which he hears them make him recall the warm loving experiences he has with the people he does see.

The church's first goal in early childhood education must be to assist parents and other caring adults with the spiritual nurture of the young. By the time a child reaches classroom age, he has already developed a vocabulary that includes words important to spiritual development. His definitions of these words, however, do not come from the dictionary but from his experiences. Depending on the nature of these experiences, words like "God," "Jesus," "Father," "love," and "good" may hold for him either positive or negative meanings. Some of these words may be devoid of all meaning, which is just as bad as negative meanings. It is difficult for a church school to help a child experience a positive meaning in such words if a negative meaning or a lack of meaning is continually reinforced in the home.

Further, the church must help its teaching adults (whether they be parents or teachers) model Christian faith, attitudes, and values. The young child is a great imitator. He particularly imitates the adults who mean most to him. From this imitation he absorbs many of the attitudes and values that will stay with him for the rest of his life.

Home and classroom teaching must relate to the experiences of the young child. We need

to help the child discover God's presence, love, and care as he explores the world around him: home, nature, toys, books, other people, etc. We may also teach him some simple Bible stories, but we should keep in mind that the people, places, and events in these stories tend to be remote from the child's world of experience. So, these stories are best used as secondary teaching experiences rather than as primary ones. Bible stories should never be used as the exclusive form of religious training. When they are so used, religion becomes something outside the child's immediate world of experience and therefore divorced from his daily life.

To nurture the spiritual life of the child calls for more than a mere presentation of religious facts. The church must aim its program at the whole child, not only at his mind but at his will, attitudes, emotions, and values as well. Above all, it should aim at helping the child see God's love and care in as many of his experiences as possible, so that, as his horizons expand, his confidence in God will also expand and include each new life experience.

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Sunday Programs

Some of the congregation's efforts in early childhood education are conducted through agencies connected with Sunday church activities. Principally these are the Nursery Roll, Sunday school classes for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds, and the Church Nursery.

The Nursery Roll

The Nursery Roll is generally sponsored by the Sunday school and is directed toward parents with children from birth to age 4.

Parents are teachers, though they may not know it. Much of their teaching is done unconsciously and begins the day they bring their child home from the hospital.

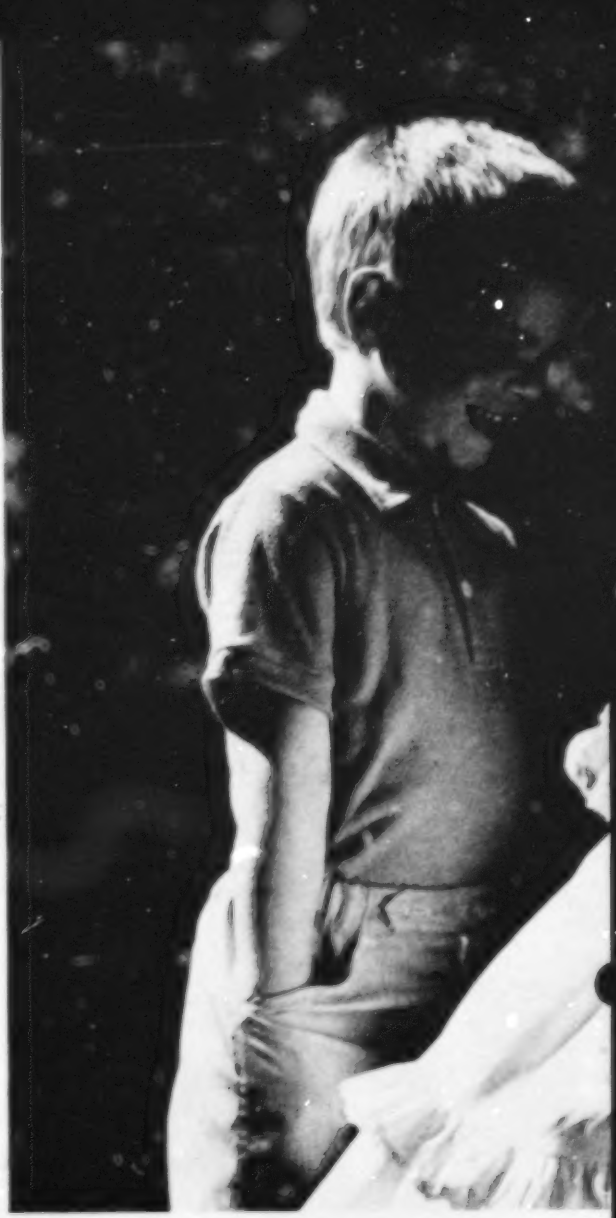
The Nursery Roll's main purpose is to provide them with information and materials that will help their teaching (whether done consciously or unconsciously) be Christian and conducive to the spiritual development of the child.

Normally a Nursery Roll superintendent (or secretary) directs the work. One or more assistants may be required, depending on the size of the congregation. Children are entered on the Nursery Roll either at birth or at baptism (normally with the parents' consent) or as soon thereafter as possible.

Nursery Roll workers keep in touch with the parents. Ideally they visit the homes to discuss Christian child development, and they bring or mail helpful materials on a quarterly schedule. They may suggest other materials and activities that help foster Christian child development. Through their departments of parish education most church denominations provide a variety of such materials for building faith and attitudes basic to the Christian life. Concordia Publishing House provides record forms for the Nursery Roll superintendent and helpful materials for parents. These include the Concordia Nursery Roll Program Packet and four Nursery Roll Bible picture storybooks. New multimedia *Mission:Life* Nursery Roll packets of lending-library materials plus parent materials should be available from Concordia by 1976.

Sunday School Classes

Sunday school classes tend to be rather formal with large blocks of time devoted to group activities. Therefore, most Sunday schools limit their enrollment to children 3 years of age or older. Children under 3 are generally not ready for formal group activities, and even some children up to age 6 or 7 need time to adjust to group activities and classroom procedures.



Concordia Publishing House provides a 2-year cycle of materials for both nursery (3s and 4s) and kindergarten (4s and 5s) classes as part of its *Life in Christ* series. The age classification for these classes is not rigid. Four-year-olds, for example, may be placed in either the nursery or kindergarten class, depending on their level of maturity. The quarterly *Life in Christ* materials include a Learners Packet and a Teachers Kit. Illustrated Bible stories, a discussion of their application, songs, prayers, and papercraft activities make up the lesson.

Beginning with September 1975 Concordia will also have available its *Mission:Life* curriculum for classes of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. This program, besides being multimedia in nature, places heavy emphasis on individualized instruction and on the role of parents in preschool education. Materials and lesson plans

provide for parent training and involvement in the classroom teaching plus parent-child activities in the home. Yet, the program allows for those children whose parents cannot or will not take part.

This program provides Teachers Kits, Parent-Learner Packets, and Leaders Kits for each quarter on three levels: Nursery, Prekindergarten, and Kindergarten. For small Sunday schools 4- and 5-year-olds can be grouped together, and the kindergarten and prekindergarten courses can be used as a 2-year cycle. It is suggested that the Nursery program be reserved for 3-year-olds and possibly also beginning 4-year-olds.

Facilities. Nursery and kindergarten classes are enhanced by a bright, airy, attractively decorated room and furniture suited to the age. The classroom space should allow for movement, exploration, and play as well as for sedentary activities. Without such space a child will be hindered from learning in the ways most appropriate to his age level and may feel imprisoned in the classroom and thus develop negative attitudes towa.d Sunday school.

The Church Nursery

The church nursery permits parents to attend worship services, knowing that their very young children will not disturb the service, yet receive proper care. It operates during the Sunday worship services (perhaps also during Bible class) and cares for children from a few months of age to about three.

In part the church nursery is custodial in nature, but it can also provide informal, unstructured, yet valuable Christian growth experiences. Suitable records played on a phonograph can be used to teach about Jesus' love. Conversations about God's love and care can come naturally as a child admires a flower, a colorful book, or plays with a toy. Short and simple Bible stories, nursery songs, finger play, prayer sentences, and Bible pictures provide content for conversation and individualized teaching.

A church nursery should be directed by a Christian who understands children and knows how to meet their needs while they are separated from their parents. He or she can train attendants to care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of young children. The attendants may take turns in serving so that no one misses church too often. However, it should be remembered that many young children have a fear of strangers. Therefore, it is best to avoid having a new attendant every Sunday. The children will feel more comfortable with attendants who have become familiar to them. Where a congregation has two or more Sunday morning services, no attendant need miss church because of serving in the church nursery.

Facilities. The church nursery requires a room with the necessary facilities for small children: baby beds, playpens, a few low tables, toys, Bible pictures, colorfully illustrated books, and space in which to play and explore. Everything about the facilities and equipment needs to be kept clean and sanitary.

References

Materials for the teacher and lesson materials for children published by Concordia Publishing House. See curriculum catalog.

Information Bulletins. Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. See "Checklist of Publications" published by this board.

Weekday Programs

Weekday programs come in a great variety: nursery schools or other preschools, weekday schools, kindergartens, parent cooperative centers, and day care centers. Before going into any of these programs, a parish board of education should study the needs of its target children in the congregation and community. Then it can best determine the type of program that will meet these needs.

Nursery School

The nursery school is sometimes called prekindergarten or preschool. Most nursery schools are for children age 3 or 4. Usually they are in session 2½ to 3 hours per day and meet from 2 to 5 days per week. Some schools that enroll both 3- and 4-year-olds conduct classes for the 3s two days a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays) and for the 4s three days a week (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays). The trend is to extend the elementary school downward to include the nursery school as part of the school.

Ideally a class should have a ratio of one adult for every five children. For example, a class of 15 children might have one teacher plus two volunteer aids, a class of 20 children might have one teacher and three volunteer aids.

Several states have certain requirements for nursery schools. These are designed to insure good standards of health and safety. Before establishing a nursery school, be sure to check with your state departments of education and welfare.

Research shows that nursery school programs which lack home follow-through are relatively ineffective. Several ways of involving parents have been found useful, for example:

- The parent cooperative center in which mothers take turns one or more days a week serving as assistant teachers. This provides parents a learn-by-doing training. It also eliminates the need for hiring assistants and thus reduces tuition costs.
- Parent enrollment in the school with their child. Usually the parent attends school one day per week, observes how the child is taught, receives suggestions on child development, and does some follow-up work with her own child. This increases her competence and confidence and helps to extend the school training into the home.
- Summer or short-term nursery school, held five mornings per week for several weeks. Here, too, a parent may be asked to accompany the child to gain competence in rearing children.

When the nursery school staff and the parents discuss goals and practices or work together to determine goals, the school can help parents adopt truly Christian goals and practices.

The nursery school is not a school for formal education. Yet, it is concerned with helping the child develop healthy spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, and social growth. Development is fostered informally through exploring, listening, speaking, imitating, art, dramatic play, music and rhythms, free play, living and working together. To do an effective job the nursery school teacher should have educational training and a solid understanding of child development.

A religion curriculum written specifically for nursery schools is now available from Concordia Publishing House. Each of the three quarters provides a Teachers Kit plus Learners Packets for use in classroom and home. This curriculum is the Blue/Red Prekindergarten program of the *Mission:Life* series.

A well-developed health and dental care program is a necessary part of the nursery school. Also in this area parents can help and learn at the same time. The health program should include proper health records and utilization of free health services, such as inoculations and TB tests. County or city health departments can advise on the availability of these services.

Facilities and Equipment. The furniture and play equipment should be suited to the ages of the children. Equipment and supplies to consider include: books and pictures; bulletin board; growth chart; a science center including an aquarium and boxes or pots for growing plants; record player with children's records; a painting easel with painting and drawing equipment; play dough; a sand box with suitable toys; play equipment that will permit sawing, hammering, rolling, throwing, catching, climbing, and stretching. Mats or cots for rest are a necessity.

The room itself should be devoid of hazards and should be spacious enough to permit free play, individualized instruction, and group activities. The outdoor play area should be well protected from traffic. Some cities and states require the outdoor area to be fenced off. In addition they may require bathroom and kitchen facilities to be readily accessible to the classroom plus such safety features as fire extinguishers and lighted exit signs.

For further information check the references under the section "Room, Equipment, Supplies, Playground."

Parent Cooperative Early Childhood Center

While parent involvement is desirable in all early childhood education programs, the parent

cooperative center puts this involvement on a more formal basis. Here the director of the program is the only professional person and the only one to receive a salary. Parents are *required* to give a certain number of hours per week to assist the director. They may serve as aids, make equipment and materials, or otherwise assist the director and thus cut the costs of the early childhood program. The program itself is the same as in the nursery school or kindergarten. However, the required and intensive involvement of parents in a learn-by-doing training aids their understanding of Christian child development and draws home and school into a united effort.

References

Religion curriculum published by Concordia Publishing House. See curriculum catalog.

Green, Marjorie M., and E. L. Woods. *A Nursery School Handbook for Teachers and Parents*, 1968. Sierra Madre Community Nursery School Association, 701 East Sierra Blvd., Sierra Madre, Calif. 91024. $2.50.

Brief and readable information on program, behavior of children, and supervision of activities. Strong on working with an assistant.

Landreth, Catherine. *Preschool Learning and Teaching*. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Describes operation of preschool programs. Lists skills with activities.

Parent Cooperative Preschools International, PCPI Box 40123, Indianapolis, Ind. 46240.

A professional organization which publishes a newsletter and helpful materials for the cooperative center.

Practical Handbook for Setting Up a Kindergarten and Other Preschool Programs. New York: National Kindergarten Association. $1.00.

Focus is on "how to organize." Suggests program elements for indoor and outdoor activities. Contains list of equipment sources.

Preschool Guide, 1969. Colorado Association of Future Homemakers of America, 207 State Services Bldg., Denver, Colo. 80203. $2.50.

Deals with programs for 2- to 5-year-olds. Includes practical suggestions for building own equipment.

Read, Katherine H. *The Nursery School*. Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1971.

A classic on human relationships. Topics include staff, building and equipment, the curriculum, home-school-community relationships, and guiding children's progress.

Ruben, Margarete. *Parent Guidance in the Nursery School*. New York: International Universities Press, 1960. $1.95.

For teachers and directors of programs. Presents typical concerns of parents. Describes nursery education.

Taylor, Katherine W. *Parents and Children Learn Together* (in cooperative nursery schools). New York: Teachers College Press, 1968.

Suggestions on how to help children learn, how to develop sympathy, release creative potential, and channel emotions. Explains how to organize a parent cooperative center.

Todd, Vivian E., and H. Hefferman. *The Years Before School*. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1972.

Covers all areas of prekindergarten education. Starting a school, the curriculum, and parent education receive major emphasis.

Wylie, Joan, ed. *A Creative Guide for Preschool Teachers*. Wayne, N. J.: Western Publishing Educational Services, 1966.

Information on planning a preschool center and the program in major curriculum areas.

Kindergarten

Today the kindergarten is part of many public and nonpublic school systems. Most kindergartens hold half-day sessions, but full-day sessions are becoming more common. Each state sets its own entrance age, at least for first grade. Kindergartens generally enroll students who will be old enough to enter first grade the following year. Curriculum guides are available from state departments of education.

Because of the potential benefits of a Christian kindergarten, congregations that cannot presently establish a full elementary school might consider establishing a kindergarten. A Christian kindergarten not only prepares a child for elementary school but also undergirds his faith and life during a highly impressionable age. Also, it can reach out to the community with the Good News and involve parents in early childhood education.

The goals of the kindergarten are essentially the same as those for any early childhood education program, but the 5 days per week provide more time for a greater impact on the child.

As in any educational effort, the balanced development of the child depends to a great extent on the faith, attitudes, and competence of the teacher (or parent). A dedicated, well-trained Christian teacher with at least a bachelor's degree in early childhood education is therefore highly desirable. All states require a

bachelor's degree for teacher certification. Parents of children enrolled in the kindergarten or other competent persons may serve as teacher aids or assistants.

Facilities and Equipment. Some of the books listed at the end of this section provide detailed suggestions for kindergarten rooms, furniture, equipment, and supplies.

References

Religion curriculum published by Concordia Publishing House. See curriculum catalog.

Griffin, Estelle, compiler. *A Core Curriculum for Christian Kindergartens.* Division of Parish Education, American Lutheran Church. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1965.

Provides an integrated approach to the program, combining religion, social science, and skills with all areas. Contains many practical suggestions.

Kindergarten Education. Department of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1968. $2.00.

Interprets the kindergarten program for parents and administrators. Deals with rationale, goals, personnel, and personal development of children.

Landreth, Catherine. *Preschool Learning and Teaching.* New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Describes operation of preschool programs. Lists skills with activities.

Mensing, Morella. *Today's Christian Kindergarten.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972.

Covers entire program. Strong in emphasis on Christian living and learning.

Parent Cooperative Preschools International, PCPI Box 40123, Indianapolis, Ind. 46240.

A professional organization which publishes a newsletter and helpful materials for the cooperative center.

Practical Handbook for Setting Up a Kindergarten—and Other Preschool Programs. New York: National Kindergarten Association. $1.00.

Focus is on "how to organize." Suggests program elements for indoor and outdoor activities. Contains list of equipment sources.

Preschool Guide. 1969. Colorado Association of Future Homemakers of America, 207 State Services Bldg., Denver, Colo. 80203. $2.50.

Deals with programs for 2- to 5-year-olds. Includes practical suggestions for building own equipment.

The First Big Step. Washington, D. C.: National School Public Relations Association, 1966. $1.00.

A handbook for parents whose child will soon enter school. Reinforces the value of learning at home.

Weekday School

"The weekday school operates for 2 hours one day per week during the school year. Its purpose is to provide the pupil with basic Christian experiences that will help him see himself as a child of God, dearly loved by Him and befriended by His Son."[5] Although it exists solely for the teaching of religion, its concern for the child's spiritual development includes concern for his intellectual, social, and emotional development as well.

Unlike the elementary grades of a weekday school, preschool classes need not meet after regular school hours. They can meet in the morning or early afternoon just as well unless their prospective students also attend a secular nursery school or kindergarten. In that case a time slot should be selected that does not conflict with the child's attendance at another school. Some congregations that have a stable attendance split the 2-hour weekday school session, conducting one hour on Sunday morning as part of the Sunday school and the other hour some time during the week.

The Red Program of Concordia's *Mission: Life* curriculum is written specifically for weekday schools. On the preschool level it offers a kindergarten curriculum (for 5-year-olds) and a prekindergarten curriculum (for 4s, but adaptable for use also with 3s). Smaller churches often combine classes of 4s and 5s and use the kindergarten and prekindergarten materials as a 2-year cycle. These curricula are multimedia in nature and include three quarterly Teachers Kits, which are reusable year after year, plus quarterly Learners Packets.

The pupil-teacher ratio in the weekday school should be small, about five pupils per adult, to allow for individual instruction. With larger classes the 5 to 1 ratio may be maintained by adding teacher assistants, especially parents. Teachers may or may not be professionals, but they should be dedicated Christians. They must be able to relate well to small children and be imaginative, loving, and forgiving.

As in the nursery school, it is desirable to involve the parents as much as possible. This involvement may be of several types:

1. Parental observation of, or participation in, the classroom experience. The purpose

[5] "Preschool Mission," *Standards and Requirements, Patterns of Performance,* 1972–73, p. 14.

is both to gain assistance for the teacher and to help parents extend the home into the classroom and the classroom into the home.

2. A class-clinic program for parents held simultaneously with the weekday school. Parents and children would be in different classrooms, but parents would be briefed on what their children are learning and shown how to carry the instruction into the home.

3. A combination of the above two types of program. Parents could spend some time in the classroom with the children and assist the teacher and could also spend some time by themselves for follow-up discussion.

In their efforts to involve the parents, teachers should never forget that learning is a two-way street. They should work as hard at learning from the parents as the parents do at learning from the teachers.

Facilities. The classrooms and equipment could be those used by the Sunday school for children of similar ages if these have room for play. Otherwise a larger room should be used, perhaps the church basement. Since the weekday school and the Sunday school are planned to complement one another and for the best coordination, weekday schools should use the curriculum materials prepared specifically for weekday schools.

References

Religion curriculum published by Concordia Publishing House. See curriculum catalog.

Landreth, Catherine. *Preschool Learning and Teaching.* New York: Harper & Row, 1972. Describes operation of preschool programs. Lists skills with activities.

Day Care Center

In many communities a need exists for day care centers. The increase in the number of working mothers and one-parent families emphasizes the need. A day care center may house children ages 2 to 5, from 5 to 6 days a week, and usually from about 7:00 a. m. to 5:30 p. m. In many communities a need exists for before-and-after school care or half-day care.

Originally day care centers provided only custodial care for the child—a place to stay; meals; and a measure of safety, entertainment, and security during the absence of the parent. Today a good day care program assumes for a large part of the day the entire range of parent responsibilities, including responsibility for all the development goals of early childhood education. Thus, the center continues to have its custodial function but also an educational one. It does its best to provide the loving care good parents would give their children at home. This includes nutritional meals and snacks, an extended rest period after lunch, supervised play, and lots of love. Also, to carry out its educational function, the center provides a program of intellectual, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual development similar to that of a nursery school.

Christian personnel in a church day care center can, apart from direct religious teaching, provide a valuable service by serving as models of Christian attitudes and behavior. For the direct teaching of religion Concordia's *Mission: Life* Prekindergarten curriculum, Blue/Red Program, is written for use also in day care centers.

Though standards vary from state to state, all states in the U. S. A. license day care centers. Licensing standards specify requirements for facilities, space, safety (fire, sanitation, health), and the adult-child ratio. Efforts are being made to set requirements also for the teacher's education. Both state, city, and/or county requirements have to be met. A congregation planning a day care center should consult with the state or local department of welfare for a copy of standards and procedures.

A variation of the day care center is the program of family day care. Up to five children of working mothers are placed in a home and cared for by a qualified mother or other attendant. Though this arrangement limits the professionally conducted education program possible in a larger center, it can be used effectively in conjunction with a nursery school. For example, children can attend a nursery school in the morning, then be placed in a nearby family center in the afternoon. Such a program makes possible nursery school attendance by children whose mothers work away from home all day. Family care programs also require licensing.

Federal legislation to subsidize day care programs is being extensively proposed in the U. S. A. If such subsidy materializes, congregations that consider accepting the subsidy will need to weigh the pros and cons carefully. Subsidy might enable some congregations that could not otherwise do so to provide a substantial service to its own children and to the children of the community, but the direct teaching of religion would probably be prohibited. However, if the subsidy is given directly to the parents rather than to the center, there would be no such prohibition.

Facilities and Equipment. Follow the licensing standards.

References

Religion curriculum published by Concordia Publishing House. See curriculum catalog.

Boguslawski, Dorothy B. *Guide for Establishing and Operating Day Care Centers for Young Children.* New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1966. $3.00.

Deals with starting a day care center, administration and staff, housing and equipment, program, financing, and relationship with parents.

Day Care: Everybody's Problem. Washington, D. C.: Office of Child Development, 1971.

Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc. 1401 K Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20005.

A professional organization which publishes a monthly newsletter and inexpensive bulletins on day care.

Evans, E., et al. *Day Care.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1971. $6.95.

Tells how to plan and operate a day care center: staff, site, health and social services, curriculum, budget, fund raising. Lists licensing department for each state.

Guide for Planning Food Services in Child Care Centers. Washington, D. C.: Food and Nutrition Service, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1971. One copy free. Ask for Bulletin No. FNS-64.

Contains information on nutrition, meal patterns, menu planning, food purchasing, and food preparation. Bibliography.

Murphy, Faye, and M. Puckett. *Church Child Care/Day Care Curriculum Planning Guide.* State Missions Committee, Baptist General Convention of Texas, 1971. Baptist Book Store, 2620 Avenue E East, Arlington, Tex. 76010. $1.50, 25¢ handling.

Deals mainly with curriculum and how to develop it. Good chapter on health and safety. Sample forms for evaluation.

Palmer, Mary W., ed. *Day Care Aides.* 1968. National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10016. $2.00.

For the person who has background in early childhood education. A guide for inservice training. Criteria for selection of aides. Appendix includes suggestions for games, books, finger plays, and materials and activities.

Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., has available a number of bulletins on day care, among them the following titles:

A Statement of Principles (Day Care 1), 1971. No. 1791-0160, 30¢.

Serving Infants (Day Care 2), 1971. No. 1791-0164. 75¢.

Staff Training (Day Care 5), 1971. No. 1791-0163. 50¢.

Health Services (Day Care 6), 1971. 75¢.

Other Services

The variety of needs in early childhood education and child care has produced a variety of services tailored to specific needs. The following services indicate the variety but do not include all the possibilities.

Drop-In Early Childhood Center

The drop-in early childhood center provides short-time care for children under elementary school age. The purpose is to relieve mothers of the care of their children for a definite period each week—to give them time off for shopping or bowling or even for a study or social group meeting at the church. The drop-in center is usually maintained for a half-day per week on a regular basis. It is supervised by paid adults. Specified fees for the services can make it self-supporting.

Facilities and Equipment. Sunday school facilities and equipment may be used. The equipment needs are the same as for any good early childhood education center.

Playgroups

Some child development specialists feel that a mother can be a better mother if she has some time for herself away from her children. This is the reason for playgroups, which are popular in England and are beginning to be organized in America.

In this arrangement a group of mothers bring their children together in a home, church, or park. Several of the mothers supervise all the children at play while the other mothers enjoy time free from their children. Each mother, of course, takes her turn supervising the children. The playgroup may meet once or twice a week for several hours or for half a day. The only expense is for snacks. Besides freeing mothers for a while each week, the playgroup provides children with an opportunity to practice social skills under adult guidance.

Equipment. The children share their own toys or use public equipment. Throw-away items may be used for serving snacks.

Federal and State Programs

The United States Government has funded a number of early childhood education programs for children of low-income families. Among these are Health Start, Home Start, Head Start, Follow Through, and Parent and Child Centers. Each program requires the grantee to follow specific federal guidelines. While different programs are directed toward different needs, all are intended to enhance young children's lives through health services, educational services, or services to parents.

Federally funded programs are authorized by current legislation, which changes as needs and viewpoints change. At this writing, controversy about federal welfare programs has created uncertainty about their future. The introduction of revenue sharing may transfer the responsibility for government programs to the states. Congregations seeking to improve their early childhood education efforts can make their own inquiries about current programs and any federal or state funds that may be available for church-sponsored programs.

For information write to the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D. C. 20201. Ask for information on federally funded early childhood education programs. Also consult state, city, or county health and welfare offices for bulletins and information.

Materials Center[4]

A materials center may be of the come-and-use type or the lending-library type or a combination of these. Its purpose is to offer parents various resources for the Christian education of their child.

The center might contain books, records, pictures, puzzles, toys, manipulative figures, flannelgraph items, filmstrips, and slides. Some of the items would be for use by the parent, some for use by the child, and some for use by the parent with the child. Some items may relate directly to Christian education, while others may be designed to help the child with his muscular or rhythmic coordination or with cognitive development.

In the come-and-use type of center a room equipped with materials is made available during certain days or hours of the week. Possibilities offered by such a center:

1. Children from low-income families can play with educational toys that may not be available at home.
2. Children can play with other children their own age.
3. Parents can examine and study materials related to their home-teaching task.
4. Parents can visit with other parents and talk about child training.

[4] Adapted from *Standards and Requirements, Patterns of Performance*, 1972–73, pp. 13, 14. Published by the Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

5. If a center resource person is available, this person can teach parents how to use various materials with their child at the center or at home.
6. If the center is also of the lending-library type, parents can check out materials for follow-up use in the home.

The materials center would have to be advertised constantly—in and outside the congregation—if it is not to suffer the disuse common to many church libraries. Material to be used by the children should be sturdy, educational, and safe. Periodic cleaning or disinfecting of materials is necessary so that they do not become carriers of disease.

References

Craft, Ruth. *Play School Play Ideas.* 1971. British Broadcasting Corporation, 35 Marylebone High Street, London W1M 4AA.
A collection of ideas that have been used with children, utilizing common household objects or inexpensive and easy to obtain materials.

National Association of Preschool Play Groups of Great Britain, 18 Low Poppleton Lane, York, England.
An organization that publishes a journal and bulletins.

Religion in Early Childhood Education Program[7]

Religion as a Way of Life

The religious dimension of any early childhood education program is much broader than telling Bible stories and conducting short periods of worship. It touches all subject areas, relating all of life to God. It touches every moment the teacher and children spend together.

The atmosphere of such a program is charged with the spirit of Christ because He lives in the people who conduct the program—if these people have been carefully selected. Thus, His love is obvious in the way the teacher interacts with the pupils. The children respond to this love with love. Not that the children are always kind, loving, and obedient, or that the teacher is all smiles and pleasantness. In this sinful world anger and love, hurting and caring, scolding and forgiving exist side by side. But God's love and forgiveness show frequently enough and strongly enough to be unmistakable. The Christian message goes beyond mere words into living experiences.[8]

The Teacher

The teacher or leader is the key to the Christian atmosphere of any early childhood education program. His or her faith expresses itself in worshiping the Creator, praising the Redeemer, and using the power the Holy Spirit gives to teach and live the Christian faith. Where such faith exists, the teacher will talk about God naturally and convincingly. The teacher will regard the children as beloved children of God and will find it a joy to encourage, guide, challenge, and help them grow. In fact, the teacher will grow in Christian faith and life right along with the children.

Christian Atmosphere in the Daily Routine

Where a Christian atmosphere prevails, the teaching of religion comes naturally—in the warm greeting the teacher gives the child when he first steps into the room; as teacher and pupil discuss an illness, injury, or new baby in the family; through a word, smile, or hug that expresses forgiveness; in continuing love and acceptance even when a child has been disciplined for misbehavior; in spontaneous prayer ("Thank You, God, for the bright sunshine," etc.); in songs and song phrases. In all this the child is led to see the close relationship between his gracious God and himself.

Similarly, God's love and care can be introduced at the science center as the children discuss the protective coloration God gives many animals or as the children note the beauty and color in His creation. In the housekeeping corner teacher and pupils can discuss God's care of the family, church going, and family prayer. Health and safety provide opportunities to explore God's great gifts of body and life. Music and art provide media for expressing thanks to God for all His gifts. All this is done naturally and unobtrusively.

The Planned Religion Period

In addition to the religious education that takes place almost incidentally throughout the day, early childhood education programs may also have planned religion periods in which the message of God's love in Jesus Christ is prominent. But such a planned period dare not reduce the study of religion to a mere spectator or listening activity. Effective religious education requires learning through all senses and through personal involvement. The child needs to listen, look, touch, move, smell, taste, explore, and talk. He not only needs to hear about faith but to share it as well both with peers and teachers. He needs to learn not only in his head but also in his heart and hands and feet.

The planned religion period may come when the children gather at the worship center for singing and prayers, or during an activity period when they can express their joy in God's blessings through some art form, or during a rest period as they listen to stories and poems related to the units theme, or even out on the playground as they put into practice concepts they have learned. In other words, a planned religion program can employ a variety of times to teach the Christian faith. It can also employ a variety of media, such as flannelgraph, sand table, creative drama, puppets, sketching, show-and-tell, "add-to" type songs, and records. The creative teacher will find what best fits the needs and interest of the group.

Program Materials

The teacher may prepare her own materials around certain themes, such as seasons, the church year, or the child's concerns and interests. Or she may use materials planned by educators and packaged commercially for early childhood classes.

The disadvantage of a home-made curriculum is that most teachers find it too difficult for one person to develop high quality teaching materials with well-defined objectives on an

[7] Based on a paper by Lois Vogel.

[8] See also "Goals in Early Childhood Education, Spiritual Development," pp. 8 ff. of this booklet.

ongoing basis. It can be expensive and is certainly time-consuming to gather just the right materials at the right time.

Prepackaged programs such as the *Mission: Life* Blue and Red courses for kindergarten and prekindergarten classes have a number of advantages. These courses come complete with a teachers guide, multimedia teaching aids, and materials for the children and parents. The guides offer enough options so that the teacher may adapt the lessons to particular interests and local circumstances. The teacher retains her freedom to use her own creativity.

Further advantages of the *Mission:Life* courses: The objectives are precise and all the media and activities are designed to support the stated objectives. If the Sunday school and other schools in the congregation use *Mission: Life*, the early childhood education program is coordinated with later instruction.

Flexibility of Program

Any program, whether developed by professional curriculum writers or by the teacher herself, will sometimes have to be set aside, simply because some of the richest teaching opportunities develop unexpectedly. A child who walks in with a new cast on an arm or experiences the first snowfall of the season or an unusually warm, sunny day after a cold winter, opens a special door to teaching about God's love and care in our lives. Particularly the teacher of young children will not want to miss any opportunity to plant and water faith, to share God's love, and to spark Christian life, hope, and joy. And this even if it means abandoning some of her well-laid plans for the day.

Materials. See the *Mission:Life* programs published by Concordia Publishing House. The Blue Program is for Christian schools that meet 5 days per week; the Red Program is for weekday schools that meet only 2 hours per week; the Green Program is for Sunday schools, and offers material for 1 hour per week of instruction; the Orange Program is for summer schools and contains 10 sessions of 2–3 hours per session.

References

Curriculum Guide for Lutheran Elementary Schools. Vol. I. Kindergarten to Grade 3. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964.

Each chapter has a section on the kindergarten, including the chapter on religion.

Jahsmann, Allan H. *The Church Teaching Her Young.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, $1.50.

Suggests procedures for teaching young children.

Mensing, Morella. *Today's Christian Kindergarten.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972. $5.95.

One of the best sources for ideas on teaching religion and on making religion meaningful to children in their learning and living.

Strommen, Merton P. *Research on Religious Development: A Comprehensive Handbook.* New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1971.

Parent Education

Parent Education Essential

Without parent participation, the church's early childhood education efforts will be largely futile. Therefore, early childhood education calls for simultaneous parent education. The nursery roll is, in fact, altogether a parent-education program. Involving parents productively in decision-making is to involve them responsibly.

Opportunities for Parent Education

Parent education takes many forms. Some of these have been indicated in descriptions of early childhood education programs. But there are others.

Parent Nights. Parent-teacher meetings or periodic parent nights are a popular form of parent education. They have an advantage in that one resource person can usually serve a larger number of parents at a time. A disadvantage is that these meetings usually reach the parents who are already interested in the Christian education of their children, missing those in greatest need of help. Yet, these meetings provide an excellent opportunity to deal with the basic needs of preschoolers, to help parents understand child growth and development, and to relate the Christian faith to this development. Here competent resource people can help parents with important "how-to's." For example, how to provide a Christian atmosphere in the home, how to use daily happenings to develop Christian understanding and faith, how to conduct family worship, or how to exemplify the Christian faith and life for children. Occasionally the program may be planned as a problem clinic.

Small Groups. Small groups can deal with topics similar to those listed above. But they provide better discussion opportunities for the participants than large groups. The opportunities for small discussion groups are as great as the imagination of leaders and the willing participation of parents permit. The Sunday school-Bible class period comes first to mind as a suitable time for small parent-education groups. But Sunday night or weekday nights are also suitable. The Sunday night meeting could be combined with a light supper as an added attraction. Small groups could meet annually for 6 or 8 weeks in fall or spring or several times each year. Obviously small groups, should several meet at one time, will require more resource people. Baby-sitting services may need to be provided as for any parent-education class.

Help as Needed. Parent education or counseling services may also be provided on an ongoing basis. The congregation's professional leaders can often provide these services. If the congregation is fortunate to have a competent resource person in early Christian childhood education with available time, this person can help as needed. The resource person can provide advice and materials suited to the needs of individual parents and perhaps issue a periodic newsletter. A small committee to assist the resource person and a small budget for materials will strengthen the parent-education effort.

In its parent-education efforts, a congregation could explore the possibility of pooling its resources with neighboring congregations. Also, it can both draw on community resources and serve interested parents in the community who are not members of the congregation.

References

Auerbach, Aline B. *Parents Learn through Discussion.* New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968.

Principles and practices of parent-group education. How to organize meetings, what to discuss, how to involve parents in discussion, and how to meet parents' needs.

Auerbach, Aline B. *The How and Why of Discipline.* New York: Child Study Association of America, 1969.

Baker, Katherine R., and X. Fane. *Understanding and Guiding Young Children.* Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970.

Easy to read. Covers all aspects of child development.

Dodson, Fitzhugh. *How to Parent.* New York: New American Library, 1970.

Specific suggestions from infancy through adolescence, mostly the preschool level. Lists toys, books, records.

Dreikurs, Rudolf, and L. Grey. *A Parents' Guide to Child Discipline.* New York: Hawthorn Books, 1970.

Case histories, practical suggestions. Applies to children from birth to age 21.

Hefferman, Helen, and V. E. Todd. *Elementary Teacher's Guide to Working with Parents.* West Nyack, N. J.: Parker Publishing Co., 1969.

Suggestions for working with parents of various backgrounds and life-styles.

Hymes, James L. *The Child Under Six.* Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963.

A quick easy-to-read reference guide.

Parent Guidance Series. A series of 14 small books including: "Guiding the Young Child," "Parents Are Teachers," "Chris-

tian Discipline," and "Worship in the Family." St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House. 75 cents.

Each booklet is divided into eight convenient study topics dealing with child training.

PAR. Parents as Resources Project. 576 Hill Terrace, Winnetka, Ill. 60093.

The goal is to reach large numbers of children through a continuing chain of parents-teaching-parents, both in larger groups and in small "kitchen" workshops involving four or five neighborhood mothers.

Smart, Mollie S., and R. C. Smart. *Children*. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1972.

Comprehensive book for the professional on development and relationships. Infancy through adolescence. Based on research, integrates Piaget and Erikson.

Organizing an Early Childhood Education Program

Good Programs Do Not Just Happen

Good programs of early childhood education do not just happen. They develop out of a good understanding of needs, solutions, and procedures. And they require determination and sustained attention to meet the needs of children in the congregation and the community. It is important in all cases to envision the service for the congregation's children and those of other interested parents in the community.

Use Official Channels

It is likely that the need to provide or improve early childhood education opportunities will be first suggested by interested parents. However, the initiative may come from the congregation's board of education, the pastor, or other professional worker in the congregation. In any case a feasibility study of the possibilities is best made by the board of education, or a person or subcommittee appointed by this board. This will provide official status and assure that the findings will be brought to the attention of the congregation when the feasibility study has been completed.

Survey the Needs and Requirements

Gather factual information on the needs of families in the congregation and the community. Personal visits, telephone calls, questionnaires, and studies made by community agencies will be helpful. Determine the number and ages of children 5 years old and younger, the needs of parents for day care and part-time educational experiences for their children, the building and other resources of the congregation, and other needed data.

Be sure to secure information on state, county, and city licensing requirements for staff, facilities, health, and safety.

Summarize and Analyze the Information

A mass of unorganized information is of little value to a board of education or congregation. Therefore, summarize the facts—show needs, parent desires, the type of program(s) that will best fit the need, congregational human and material resources, and ways of meeting all licensing requirements.

Make a Decision

On the basis of the facts, recommend a plan to be approved or amended by the board of education and ultimately by the congregation. Make precise recommendations in stating the

need, objectives, probable participation, space, costs, availability of trained or volunteer personnel, type of program(s), costs, and manner of financing. The recommendations should clearly answer the question: "How can we best use our resources to fill the needs uncovered by the survey?"

Implement the Decision

Pinpoint the responsibility for setting up and operating the program(s). Employ a teacher or director. If this is a professional person with intimate knowledge of early childhood education, delegate authority to this person, but maintain the director's responsibility to the board of education. If the leader is a volunteer, appoint a special committee to help in planning and administering the program. Usually several months will be required to get the program under way.

Prepare the Congregation

Many a worthy congregational effort has failed or languished because members were uninformed or unconvinced of its value. Use every avenue of information and promotion—the voters assembly and organizations in the congregation, the congregation's monthly paper and the church bulletins, word of mouth, and whatever other means are available. Information and support go hand in hand.

Relate the Program to Other Efforts in Christian Education

There is no room in a Christian congregation for scattered shots or for isolated programs unrelated to the church's total work. As the body of Christ needs every member to make its Christian impact, so every effort in Christian education needs the support of every other effort, as it needs also to support every other effort. The early childhood education program cannot exist apart from parent education, the Sunday school, the day school, adult education, or any other agency of Christian education in the congregation. Therefore, coordination with the objectives of the congregation and with the overall objectives of Christian education needs to be planned and enforced.

For purposes of coordination, a professional early childhood education counselor or administrator could be an asset to a congregation. Some large congregations may be able to engage the services of such a specialist, or several congregations may cooperate in providing professional services for their early childhood education programs. Professional help or not, congregations will depend largely on dedicated Christian volunteers in most of their early childhood education efforts.

Mission:Life (Concordia) provides much of the coordination of program and materials. Coordination of staff, facilities, equipment, time, and financing require similar concentration of effort.

References

Robbert, Lois. *Creating a Good Church Nursery School.* 1972. American Lutheran Education Association, Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa 50677. $2.00.

A small paperbound booklet of 29 pages. In a breezy way the author tells how to organize and operate a church nursery school. Many of the suggestions apply to other early childhood education programs as well.

See the Selected References under "Sunday Programs" and "Weekday Programs" and the "General References" for titles that contain suggestions for organizing programs.

Administration and Staffing

Administration

One person, a professional counselor-administrator, is desirable to oversee and direct the congregation's early childhood education services. This person may be a graduate of one of the Synod's teachers colleges who has received special preparation for early childhood education. For many congregations a professional person is an unattainable ideal, and so they operate with volunteer leaders. Both professional and volunteer leaders should have some knowledge of early childhood education and be willing to grow in competence through study, reading, and experience. Leaders, teachers, and helpers also need love for children, patience, and the ability to work with young children.

Because of the wide variety of early childhood education programs, the leader or counselor, whether professional or volunteer, will usually have a great variety of duties, including one or more of the following:

1. Serve as head teacher of the nursery school.
2. Serve as head teacher of the weekday school.
3. Set up or administer the nursery-roll program and train teams of nursery-roll visitors.
4. Be the resource person for the congregation's parent education program.
5. Set up, operate, and serve as resource person for the congregation's materials center.
6. Train workers for and organize a nursery for operation during the congregation's Sunday morning worship services.
7. Serve as superintendent of the church's day care center.
8. Coordinate all the various preprimary programs and services of the congregation.
9. Serve as counselor to the pastor and congregation in matters pertaining to preprimaries, keeping abreast of all research in the field.[9]

Other Staff Members

The nature of the early childhood services and agencies will determine the need for other staff members, whether teachers, a secretary, a cook, or other volunteer help.

[9] This listing is from *Standards and Requirements, Patterns of Performance*, 1972–73, p. 15.

References

Read, Katherine H. *The Nursery School.* Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1971.

A classic on human relationships. Topics include staff, building and equipment, the curriculum, home-school-community relationships, and guidance on observing and guiding child progress.

See Robbert, Lois. *Creating a Good Nursery School,* Chapter 3: "The Staff," listed in previous section. Also see references under "Sunday Programs" and "Weekday Programs" and the "General References" for titles that deal with administration and staffing.

Room, Equipment, Supplies, Playground

The early childhood education program, whatever its nature, may be conducted in a room of the educational wing of the church, the school if a suitable room is available, or the church basement provided it is dry and well lighted. In any case the room will have to meet state, county, or city licensing rules on space, health, and safety. Safety provisions may include requirements to carry insurance.

Desirable space requirements are sometimes listed at about 35 square feet of indoor space and 75 square feet of outdoor space per child. But these space requirements may be flexible. Outdoor space requires protection from traffic and other hazards.

Equipment needs range from a desk and storage space for the teacher to furniture suited to the ages of children, to washable rugs or mats for rest periods, to a refrigerator to keep items for the snack period. This in addition to the learning and play equipment.

Many publications for specific early childhood education programs contain detailed lists of equipment and supplies, and the reader is referred to one or more of these sources.

References

Osmon, Fred Linn. *Patterns for Designing Children's Centers.* Educational Facilities Laboratories, 477 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022. 1971. $2.00.

Useful for all preschool and day care settings. Combines educational theory with suggestions for facilities and equipment. The 35 patterns range from "Children's Toilet Area" and "Children's Sinks" to "A Multi-Realm Environment for Child and Adult" and "The Floor as a Walking Surface/as Furniture."

Robbert, Lois. *Creating a Good Nursery School* (listed earlier). Chapter 2: "The Physical Space" and Chapter 5: "The Equipment" and other references that deal with room, equipment, supplies, and playground. Some of these appear under "Sunday Programs," "Weekday Programs," and "General References."

Schools for Early Childhood. Educational Facilities Laboratories, 477 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022. 1970.

A highly visual look at some significant preschool facilities. Though of greatest use to congregations planning to build new or alter old facilities, the visuals should suggest to any education boards and teachers a number of ideas for classroom arrangements and equipment.

Stone, Jeannette Galambos. *Play and Playgrounds.* Washington, D. C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1970.

A large-format, highly illustrated book on children's play and playgrounds.

Mensing, Morella. *Today's Christian Kindergarten.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, Chapter 14: "Equipment and Supplies."

Transportation of Children

If the congregation operates a bus for the transportation of its school children, it may be possible to utilize it for some of the transportation needs. However, such transportation is not suitable for children under kindergarten age. Transportation is essentially the responsibility of the parents who may individually transport their children or pool their resources so that one mother transports the children of several families on a given day.

Reference

"Transportation Costs." Bulletin No. 310-2 (free), published by Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

Financing the Program

Questions to Be Answered

For an adequate program, whatever its nature, adequate financing is necessary. A congregation setting up an early childhood education program will have to answer four major questions on financing:

1. Is the program to be self-supporting?
2. Is the congregation able and willing to subsidize the program? If so, to what extent?
3. Can the congregation provide at least the physical facility, including furniture and equipment, if the parents pay for operation of the program?
4. Is the service intended just for members or also for the larger community?

The Budget

The board of education or the committee supervising the operation is responsible for presenting a detailed budget of costs and anticipated income from tuition, contributions, and other sources.

Expenditures. Included in expenditures may be salaries, Social Security or pension benefits, payroll taxes, rental value of space, materials and supplies, utilities, postage and stationery, office and janitor supplies, food costs, transportation costs, replacement and repair of equipment and supplies, insurance, cost of facility repair, staff conference expenses, continuing education for staff, subscriptions to publications, and other expense items.

Income. Anticipated income may include direct congregational support; tuition; reimbursement for the milk program or other reimbursement from government agencies; contributions from individuals, businesses, or organizations; and possibly the value of volunteer work which saves actual cash outlay.

First Year's Budget. The first year's budget may be larger than that of subsequent years because of nonrecurring expenses. These may include alterations in the facility to make it licensable, purchase of furniture and equipment which will last beyond the first year, purchase of nonconsumable toys and supplies, and purchase of refrigerator, files, or other noneducational equipment.

Factors in a Tuition Policy. Factors in a fee or tuition policy include the objectives of the congregation in establishing the facility, charges made for similar programs in the community, and the economic ability of the clientele.

References

See Evans E., et al. *Day Care.* Listed in the section on "Week Day Programs." Also others that contain information on financing.

Aids for Planners and Teachers

General References

Cohen, Dorothy H., and V. Stern. *Observ- and Recording the Behavior of Young Children.* New York: Teachers College Press, 1958. $1.25.

This is basically a guide for record-keeping. The focus is on the individual child's activities in a variety of circumstances.

Education for Children Under Six. Arlington, Va.: National Council of State Consultants in Elementary Education, 1968.

Addressed to planners of all types of programs for children under age 6. Excellent bibliographies.

Equipment and Supplies. Washington, D. C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1968. $1.50.

Lists equipment tested by classroom teachers and approved by ACEI. Basic equipment for each of the following: nursery, kindergarten, primary, and intermediate levels. Names and addresses of equipment suppliers are included. Revised every two years.

Frazier, Alexander, ed. *Early Childhood Education Today.* Washington, D. C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1968. $2.00.

Guidelines for planners. Topics include goals of early childhood education, curriculum priorities, personnel, evaluation, and parent programs. Especially valuable for the administrator.

Hildebrand, Verna. *Introduction to Early Childhood Education.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1971.

Covers all aspects of early childhood education. Combined nursery and kindergarten curriculum. Chapters on dramatic play, field trips, and food included.

Hymes, James L., Jr. *Early Childhood Education.* Washington, D. C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1968. $1.25.

Current information about developments in early childhood education. Especially helpful to the person with limited background.

Hymes, James L., Jr. *Teaching the Child Under Six.* Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1968.

Based on sound principles of child development. Recommended especially for administrators and persons beginning work in early childhood education.

Jahsmann, Allan H. *The Church Teaching Her Young.* St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House.

Suggests teaching procedures for young children.

Leeper, Sarah H., et al. *Good Schools for Young Children.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968.

A complete guide for working with children age 3 to 5.

Lewis, Anne G., ed. *Conference Time for Teachers and Parents.* Washington, D. C.: National School Public Relations Association, 1970. $1.25.

Guidelines for planning conferences, responses to typical questions, and suggestions for conference follow-up. Addressed to elementary school teachers, but useful for teachers of young children.

Meyer, Frederick A., and Harold W. Rast. *Foundations for Christian Education.* Board of Parish Education, LCMS, 1971.

Deals with objectives, the nature of children, and other basic topics.

Preschool Breakthrough: *What Works in Early Childhood Education.* Washington, D. C.: National School Public Relations Association, 1970.

Schmidt, Velma E., ed. *Early Childhood Education and the Church.* Lutheran Education Association, 1970 Yearbook.

Provides information for congregations on early childhood education programs. Suggests techniques for making decisions.

Silverblatt, Iris. *Creative Activities.* 1964. Creative Activities, P. O. Box 16005, Cincinnati, Ohio 45216. $2.90.

Presents music, art, science, woodworking, storytelling, and dramatic play ideas. Includes activities, methods, and materials. Purpose is to enlarge teacher's choices.

Wiencke, Gustav K., ed. *Pre-Threes in Your Church, A Provisional Manual for Experimental Use.* Philadelphia: Board of Parish Education, Lutheran Church in America, 1970.

Professional Journals

American Education (10 issues per year). $4.50. Published by Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). Order from Superintendent of Documents.

Reports on all aspects of education, including early childhood education.

Childhood Education (monthly October to May). $12.00. Association for Childhood Education International. Membership in ACEI includes journal subscription.

Articles and research on the child from infancy through preadolescence.

Children Today (formerly *Children*). Six issues per year. $2.00. Published by Children's Bureau, Office of Child Development, HEW. Order from Superintendent of Documents.

Interdisciplinary journal.

Early Years (monthly September through May). $7.00. Early Years, Box 1223, Darien, Conn. 06820.

For teachers of preschool through grade 3.

ERIC/ECE Newsletter (bimonthly). No charge, funded by U. S. Office of Education. Resources Information Center/ Early Childhood Education. ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education.

News items on all aspects of early childhood education.

K-3 Bulletin (10 issues per year). $1.80 per month, plus postage and handling. K-3 Bulletin, West Nyack, N. Y. 10994.

Practical teaching ideas and materials.

Keeping Up with Elementary Education (4 issues per year). $8.50 per year membership in AA-EKNE includes journal subscription. American Association of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators, NEA, 1201 16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

Initiates and speaks on movements to improve the educational well-being of children. Many articles on early childhood education.

Merrill-Palmer Quarterly of Behavior and Development (4 issues per year). $8.00. Merrill-Palmer Institute, 71 East Ferry Ave., Detroit, Mich. 48202.

A broad scope of topics representing the various disciplines bearing on human development.

PEN (potpourri of news). Published monthly seven times October through May (no December issue). Four pages per issue. $6.00. Multimedia Education, Inc., 11 West 42nd St., New York, N. Y. 10036.

Preschool education newsletter with report on innovation and experimentation.

Today's Child (monthly). $5.00. Today's Child, 92A Nassau St., Princeton, N. J. 08540.

News and research summaries in the child care field.

Young Children (6 issues per year). $10.00 a year for nonmembers. National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Information for the study, interpretation, and improvement of the education and development of young children.

Professional Organizations

Organizations that specialize in one aspect of early childhood education are listed under the appropriate topic. The following professional organizations have excellent and inexpensive booklets in more than one area, including the primary grades. They furnish lists of their publications on request.

American Association of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators (NEA), 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C. 20016.

Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc., 1426 H. St., N. W., Washington, D. C. 20005.

Department of Early Childhood Education, Lutheran Education Association, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, Ill. 60305 (publications to members).

The Child Welfare League of America, 345 East 46th St., New York, N. Y. 10017.

National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20009.

National Congress of Parents and Teachers, 700 North Rush St., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

Publishers' Addresses

Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 470 Atlantic Ave., Boston, Mass. 02210.

Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20016.

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. See NEA.

Augsburg Publishing House (American Lutheran Church), 426 South Fifth St., Minneapolis, Minn. 55415.

Beacon Press, 25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass. 02108.

Board of Parish Education, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, 3558 South Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63118.

Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1300 Alum Creek Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43216.

Child Study Association of America, 132 East 74th St., New York, N. Y. 10028.

Child Welfare League of America, Inc., 44 East 23rd St., New York, N. Y. 10010.

Concordia Publishing House (The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod), 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63118.

Department of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators. See NEA.

Dimension Publishing Co., Box 4221, San Rafael, Calif. 94903.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, 805 W. Pennsylvania Ave., Urbana, Ill. 61801.

General Learning Corporation, 250 James St., Morristown, N. J. 07960.

Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 10 East 53rd St., New York, N. Y. 10022.

Hawthorn Books, Inc., 70 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y. 10011.

International Universities Press, Inc., 239 Park Avenue South, New York, N. Y. 10003.

John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 605 3rd Ave., New York, N. Y. 10016.

Lutheran Church in America, Publications Dept., 231 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10002.

Macmillan Co., The, 866 3rd Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022.

National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C. 20009.

National Council of State Consultants in Elementary Education, 3942 Upland St., Arlington, Va. 22207.

National Education Association (NEA), 1201 Sixteenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

National Kindergarten Association, 8 West 40th St., New York, N. Y. 10018.

National School Public Relations Association. See NEA.

New American Library, Inc., 1301 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N. Y. 10019.

Office of Child Development, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, P. O. Box 1182, Washington, D. C. 20013.

Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10016.

Pantheon Books, Inc., Division of Random House, Inc., 201 East 50th St., New York, N. Y. 10022.

Parker Publishing Co., Village Square Bldg., West Nyack, N. Y. 10994.

Penguin Books, 7110 Ambassador Road, Baltimore, Md. 21207.

Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J. 07632.

Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.

Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 525 West 120th St., New York, N. Y. 10027.

W. B. Saunders Co., West Washington Square, Philadelphia, Pa. 19105.

Western Publishing Educational Services, 150 Parish Drive, Wayne, N. J. 07470.